Urban Green Infrastructure opportunities for circularity and resource resilience

GORDON conference of Industrial Ecology
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URBAG Integrated System Analysis of Urban Vegetation and Agriculture

Horizon 2020
European Research Council- Cosolidator
2019-2024

Urbag.eu

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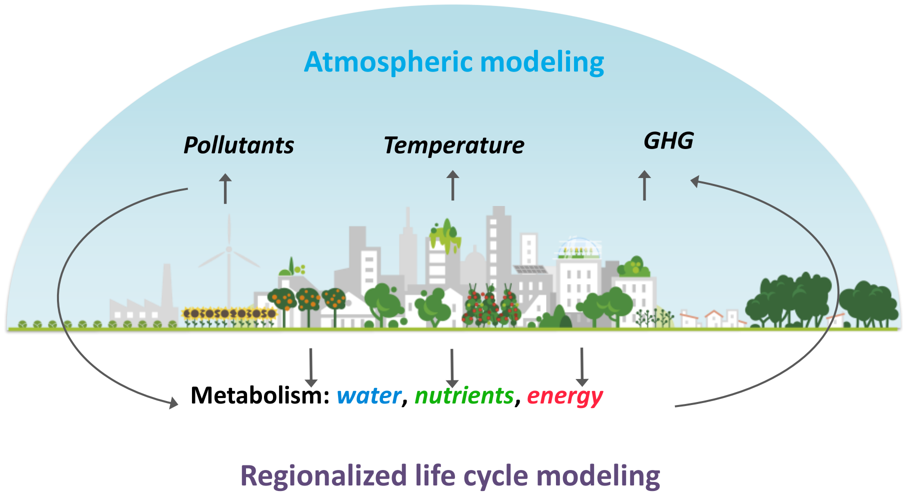
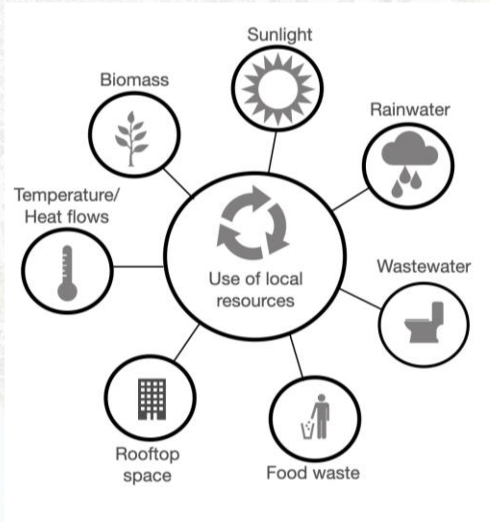
General Vision of URBAG



Urban and peri-urban agriculture

Urban and peri-urban agriculture



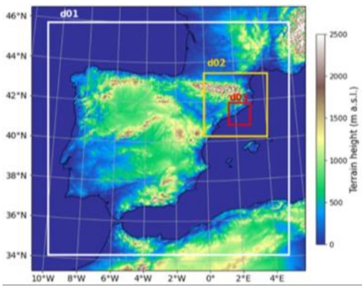
Urban and peri-urban agriculture

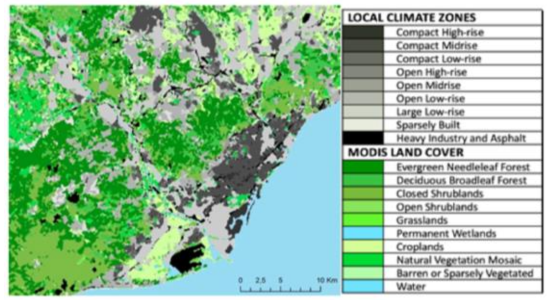
Water:
How much water is needed and how does it affect our river basin ecological status? What will be future needs as we increment urban agriculture in light of future reductions in precipitation and river flows?

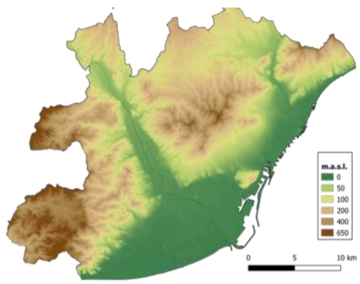
Energy:
Does peri-urban agriculture result in a cooling belt around the more urban area?

Nutrients:
What are the impacts associated to urban agriculture in terms of fertilizer use? How can circularity of nutrients in urban areas reduce impacts, both direct and indirect?

Case Study: The Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (AMB)







- Total area of AMB: 636 km$^{2:}$
  - 40% urban fraction
  - 8% peri-urban agriculture
- 3.3 million people
- 16,000 people/km^2
- AMB is limited by two rivers running Llobregat and Besòs

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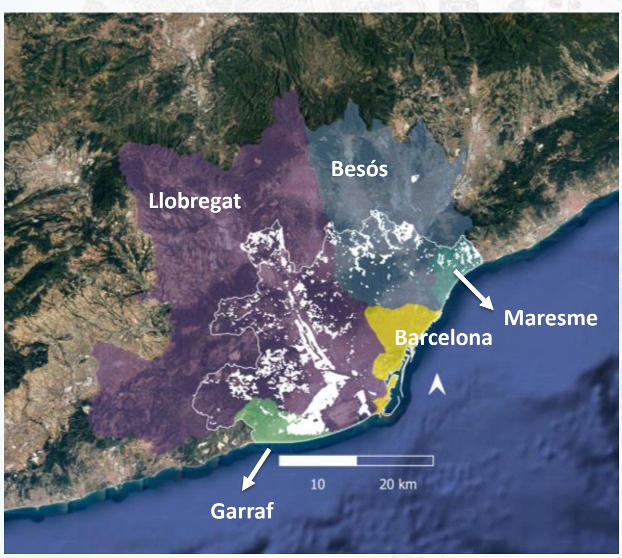
Water for peri-urban agriculture



There are five major river basins in the AMB (background image from Google satellite).

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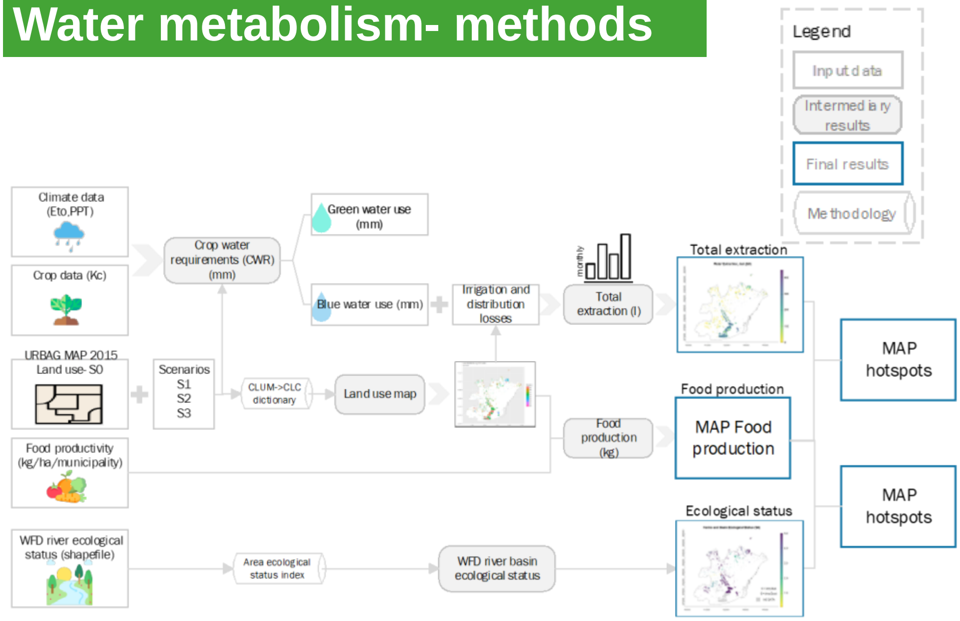
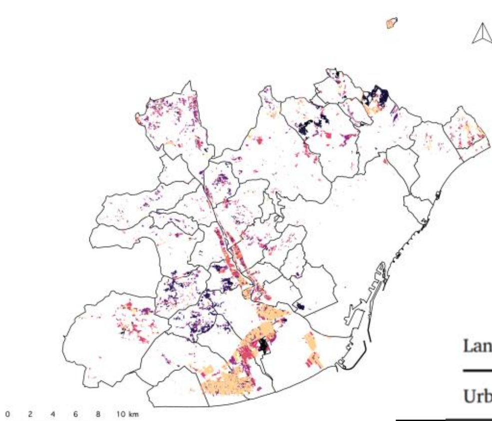
Water metabolism- methods



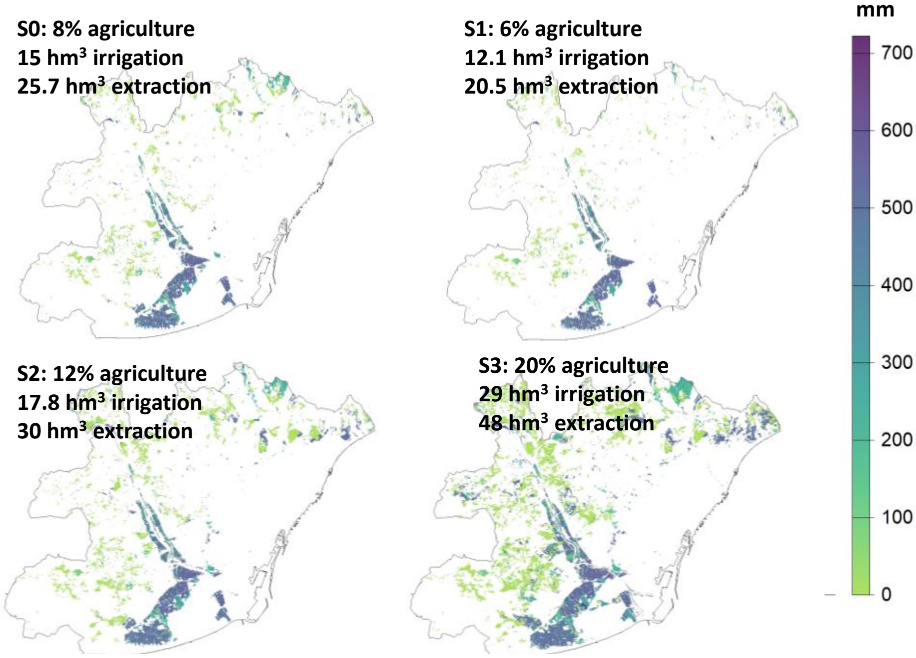
Water- peri-urban agriculture scenarios



	Land-cover				
	Urban*	Forest**	Agriculture	Pastures	Other***
S0.	45%	42%	8%	3%	2%
S1.	52%	38%	6%	2%	2%
S2.	46%	38%	12%	2%	2%
S3.	45%	32%	20%	2%	2%

Padró et al., 2020

Water: irrigation



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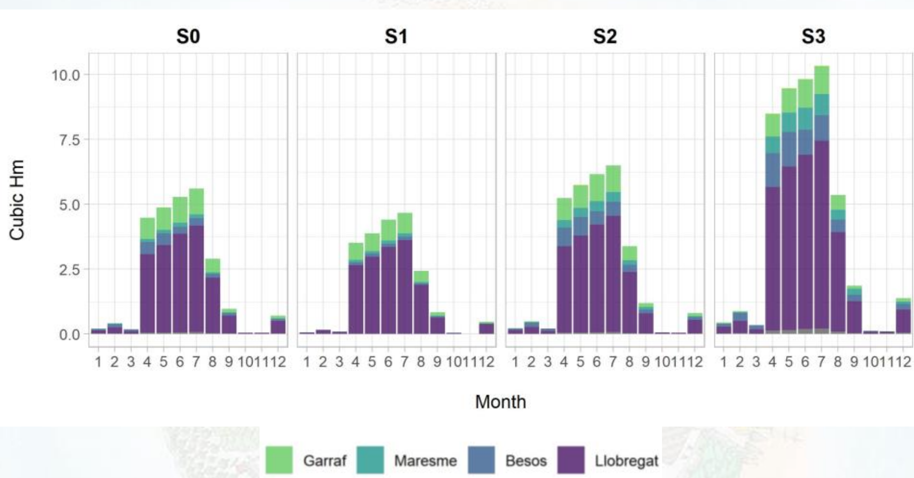
Water: extraction per month



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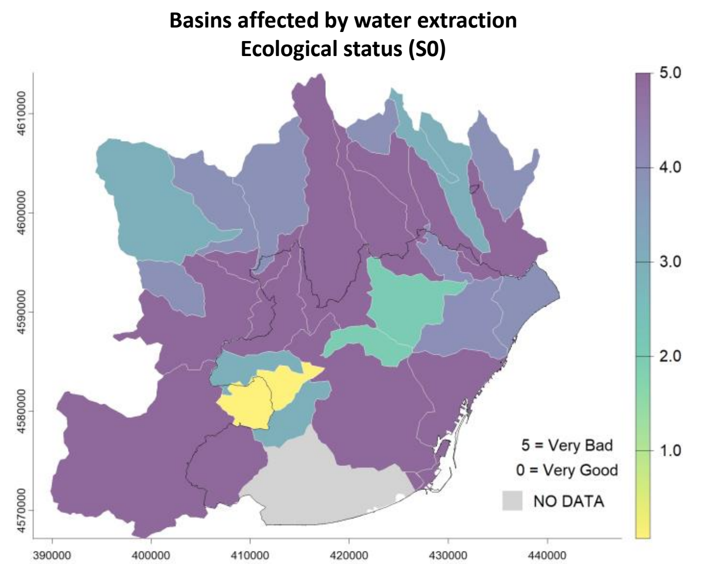
How does water extraction affect ecological status?



Ecological Status: Pollution, water extraction, physiological alterations, habitat impact, saline intrusion, temperature.

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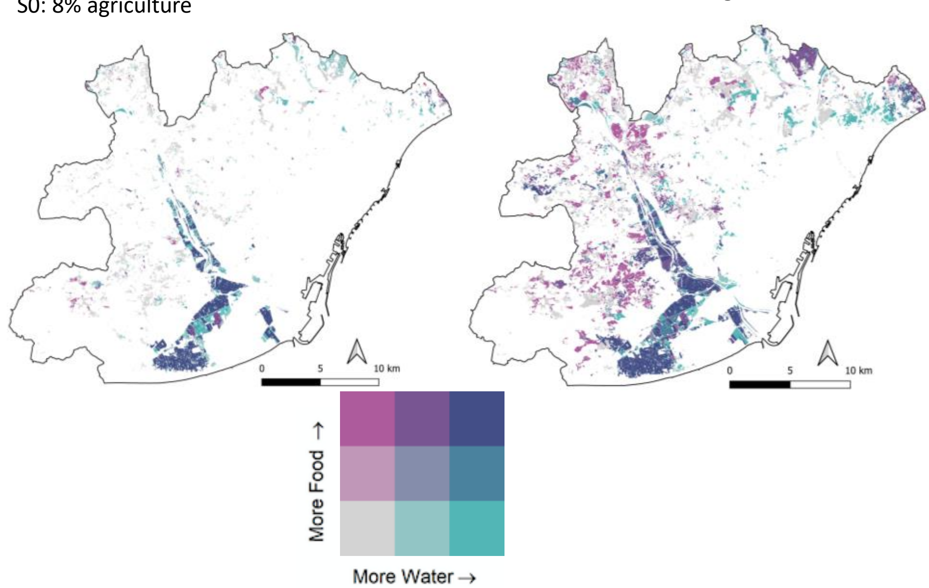
Water-food nexus

S0: 8% agriculture

S3: 20% agriculture



Manuscript: "A georeferenced sustainability water metabolism assessment for managing trade-offs at the nexus between water, peri-urban agriculture, and the environment " in progress.

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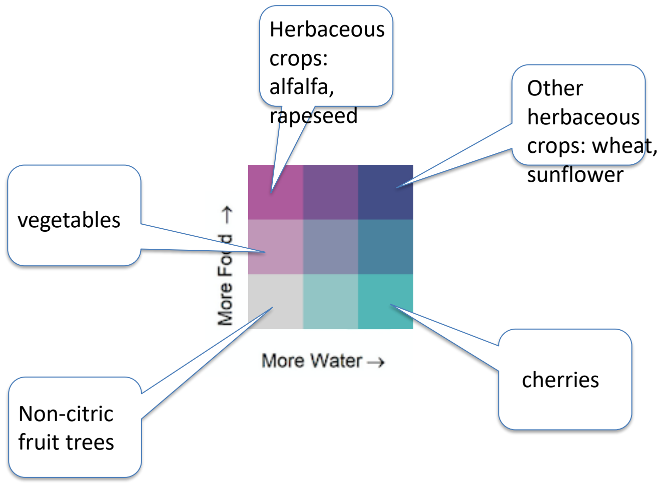
Water-food nexus



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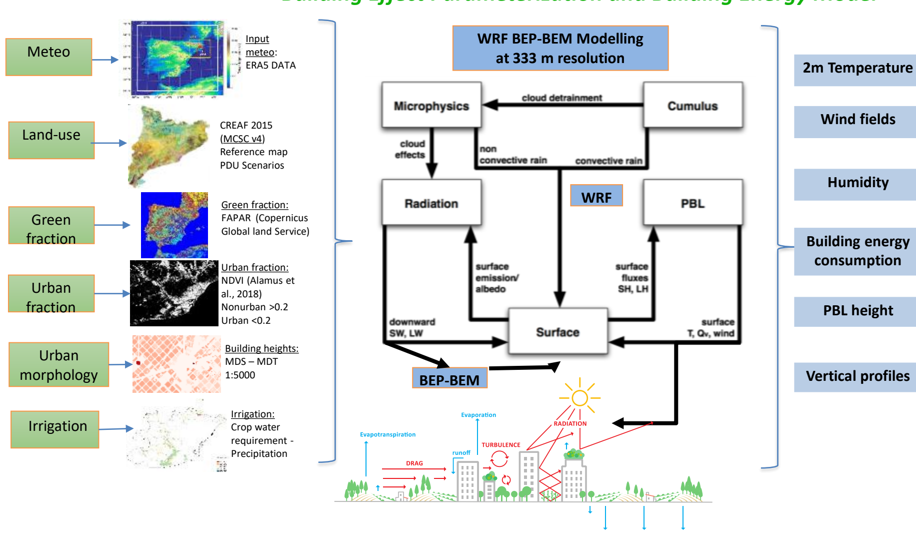
Crop irrigation: cooling belt?

Weather Research Forecasting Model with Urban Canopy Model Building Effect Parameterization and Building Energy Model



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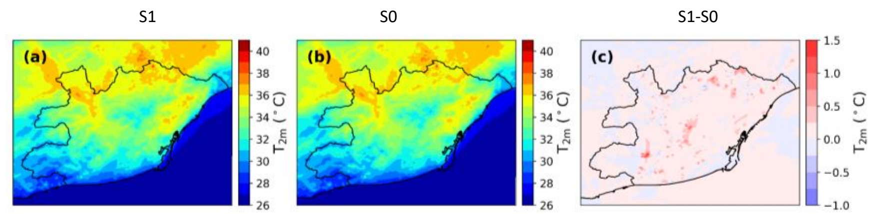
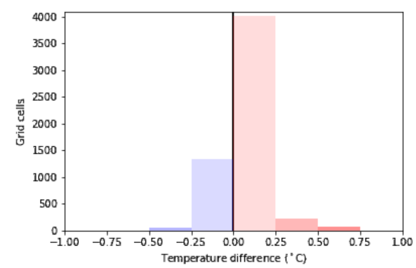
Crop irrigation: cooling belt? Scenario 1

Hourly average 2m temperature between 1 and 4pm during Heat Wave 2015



Maximum local reduction of 0.86 ºC.

Maximum local increase of 1.37 ºC.



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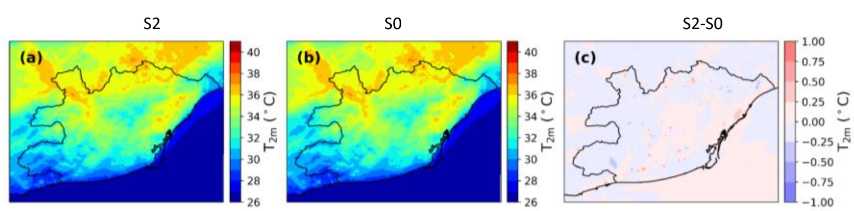
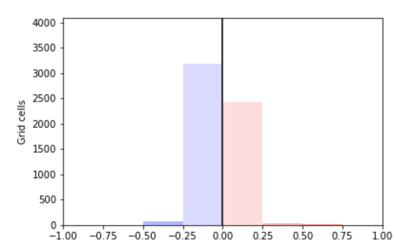
Crop irrigation : cooling belt? Scenario 2

Hourly average 2m temperature between 1 and 4pm during Heat Wave 2015



Maximum local reduction of 0.95 ºC.

Maximum local increase of 0.96 ºC.



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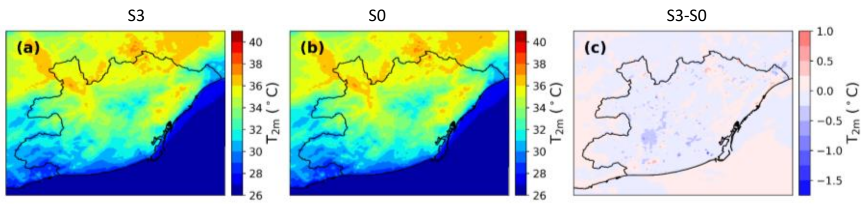
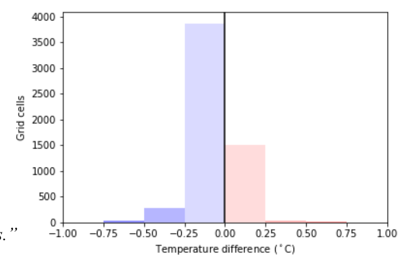
Crop irrigation: cooling belt? Scenario 3

Hourly average 2m temperature between 1 and 4pm during Heat Wave 2015



Maximum local reduction of 1.73 ºC.

Maximum local increase of 0.79 ºC.



Manuscript: "The cooling effect of peri-urban agriculture in cities."

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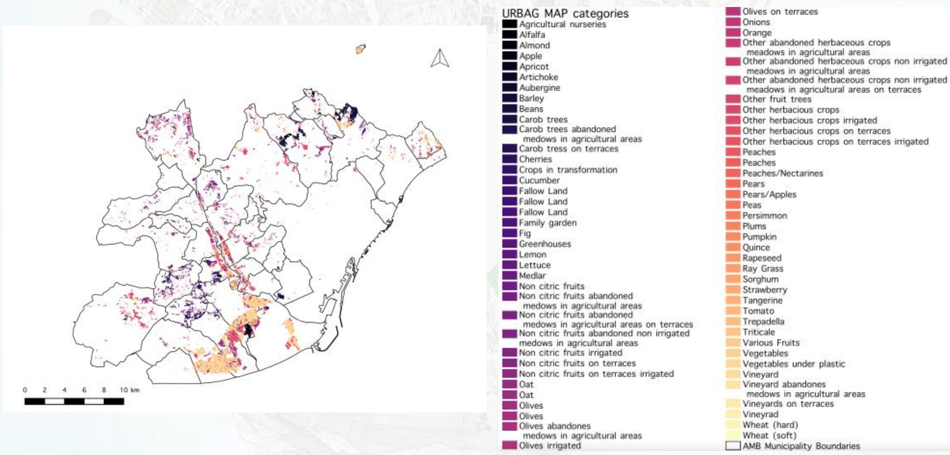
Nutrients: peri-urban agriculture

5,584 ha **105,868 tones of crops per year**



Location of peri-urban agriculture in the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (AMB) and different land uses according to the URBAG map. Taken from: Mendoza Beltran et al., (2022)

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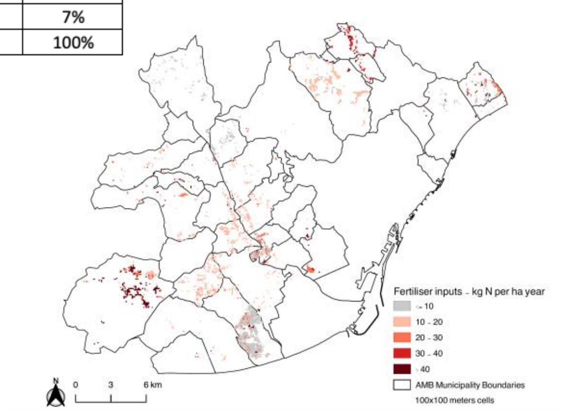
Nutrients: peri-urban agriculture

Nutrient requirements: 53.24 tonnes N /year of mineral fertilizer (2015)

N input	Amount (tonnes N/yr)	Percentage
Mineral fertilizers	53.24	31%
Manure	97.9	56%
Agricultural residues	9.96	6%
Symbiotic N fixation	13	7%
Total	174.1	100%



Manuscript: "Displaying geographic variability of peri-urban agriculture environmental impacts in the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona: a regionalized life cycle assessment" recently submitted to Science of the Total Environment

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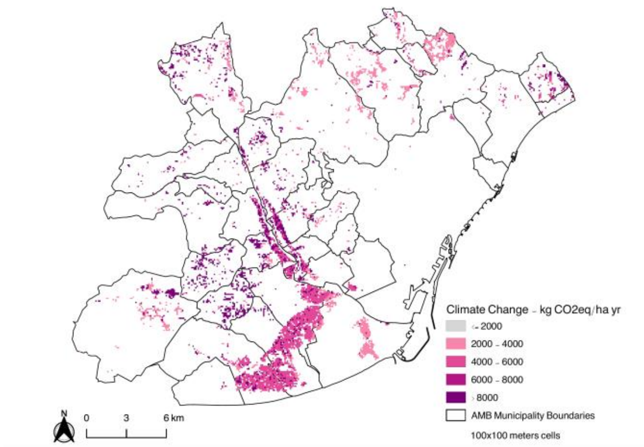
Nutrients: peri-urban agriculture

Carbon footprint 699,126 tonnes CO2e (2015)

For the functional unit of total crop production of AMB , which is 105,868 tonnes.



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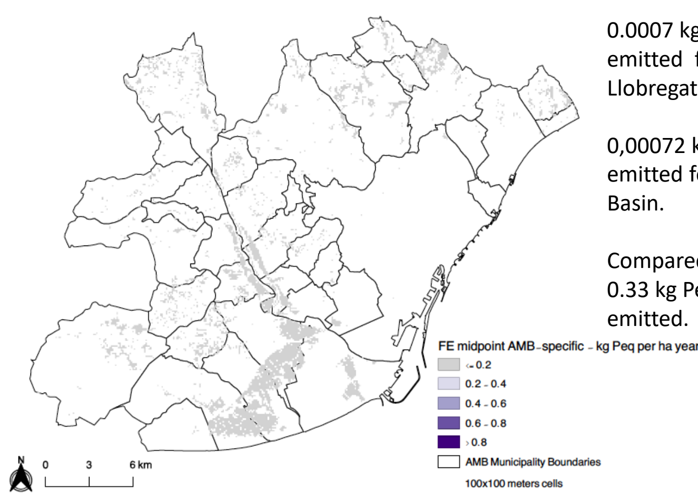
Nutrients: peri-urban agriculture

Freshwater Eutrophication 0.0335 tonnes P eq (only direct emissions)

For the functional unit of total crop production of AMB , which is 105,868 tonnes.



0.0007 kg Peq/kg P emitted for the Llobregat Basin.

0,00072 kg Peq/kg P emitted for Besós Basin.

Compared to ReCiPe: 0.33 kg Peq/kg P emitted.

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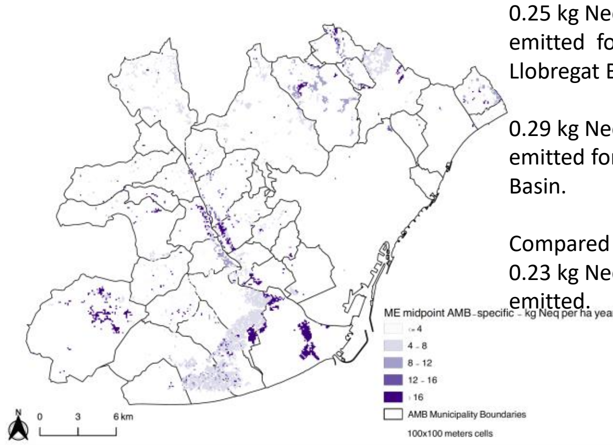
Nutrients: peri-urban agriculture

Marine Eutrophication 48.9 tones N eq (only direct emissions)

For the functional unit of total crop production of AMB , which is 105,868 tonnes.



0.25 kg Neq/kg nitrate emitted for the Llobregat Basin.

0.29 kg Neq/kg nitrate emitted for Besós Basin.

Compared to ReCiPe: 0.23 kg Neq/kg nitrate emitted.

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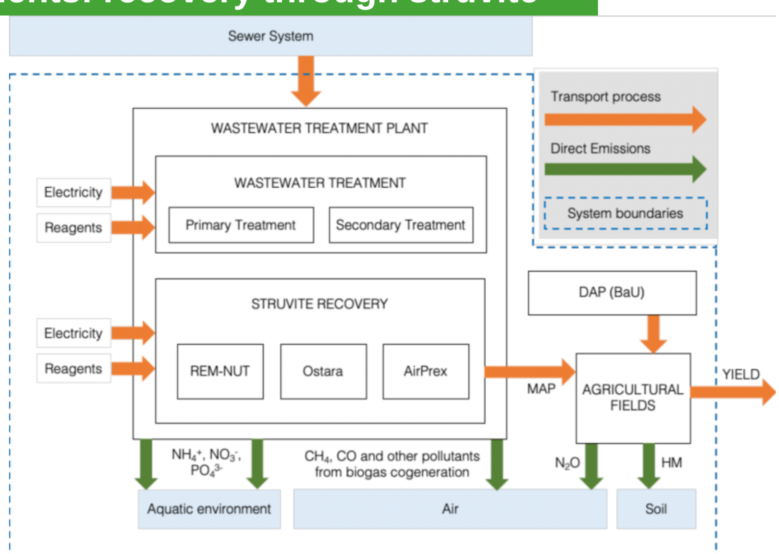
Nutrients: recovery through struvite



- all technologies are able to recover between 5 and 30 times the amount of phosphates required to fertilize the entire agricultural area of the AMB annually

Rufí et al., 2020

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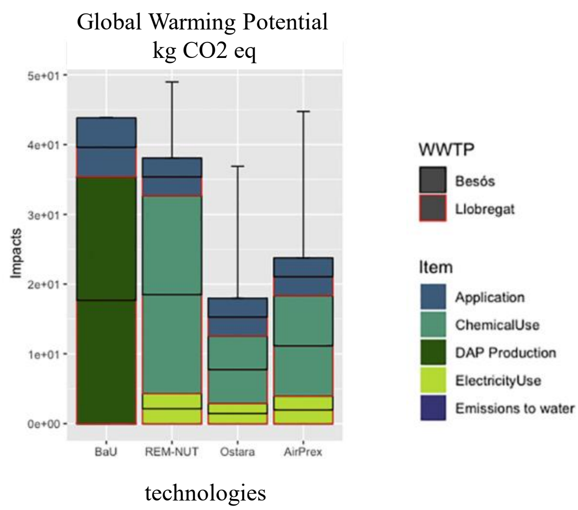
Nutrients: recovery through struvite

Functional Unit: kg of P recovered and applied.

Error bar upper value represents maximum possible impact based on the range of P-recovery for every specific technology.



So after seeing this, our question here is how would the use of struvite help us reduce the impacts of fertilization in peri-urban agriculture?

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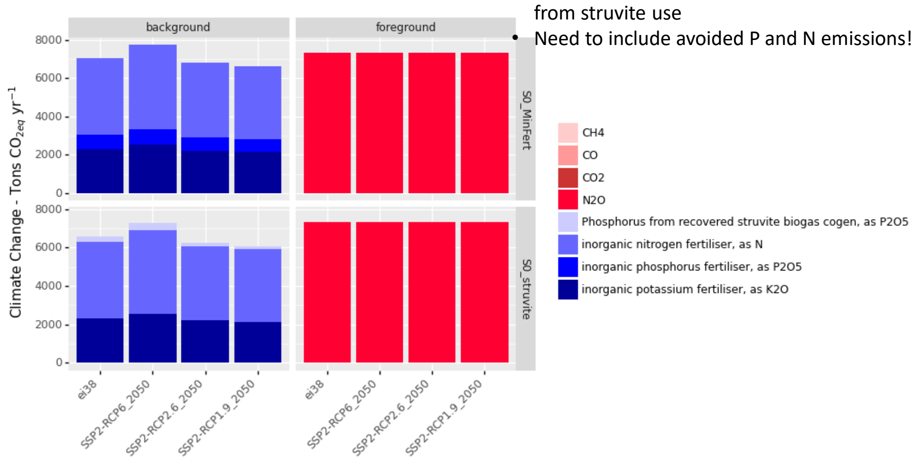
Nutrients: recovery through struvite, future scenarios

We learn some interesting things… and key research gaps are identified:

- More or less equal foreground and background
- Nitrogen and potassium much more relevant on the background
- Thus few changes in struvite scenario background
- Need to research more on N_2O emissions from struvite use
- Need to include avoided P and N emissions!!



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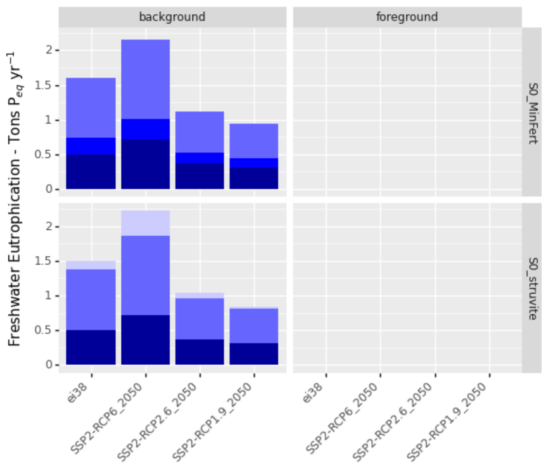
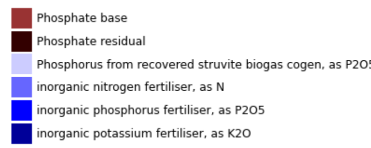
Nutrients: recovery through struvite, future scenarios



- **For FE: Background matters most as regionalized CF for phosphate is really small 0.0007 vs 0.33 of recipe.**



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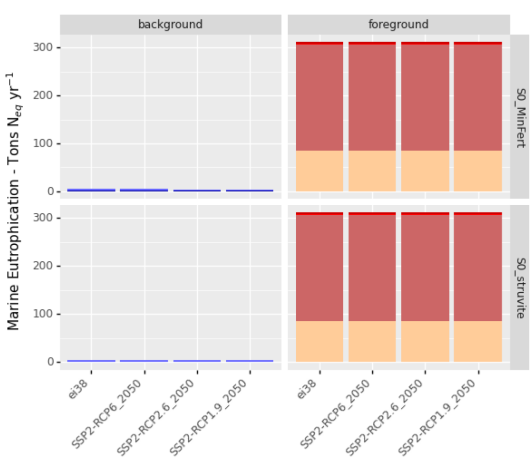
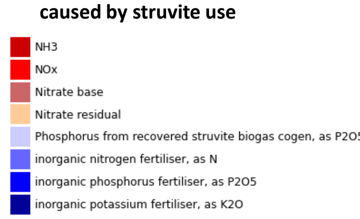
Nutrients: recovery through struvite, future scenarios



- **For ME:**
  - **Foreground is much more relevant due to nitrate leaching.**
  - **More research is needed on emissions caused by struvite use**



Implications of this:

- **N circularity is much more important than P in terms of GWP and eutrophication, but P recovery is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT from a resource depletion perspective.**

- **P and N recovery need to go hand in hand for circularity to make sense.**

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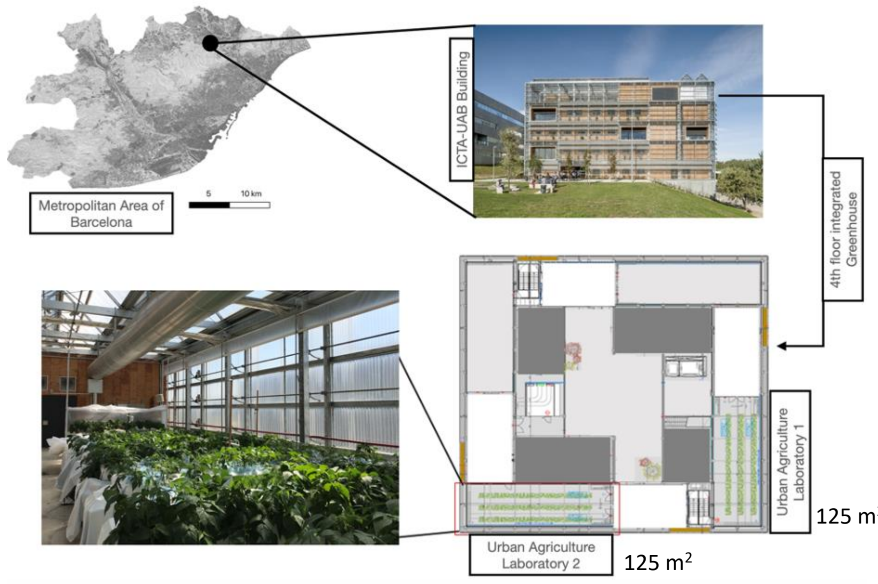
From theory to practice



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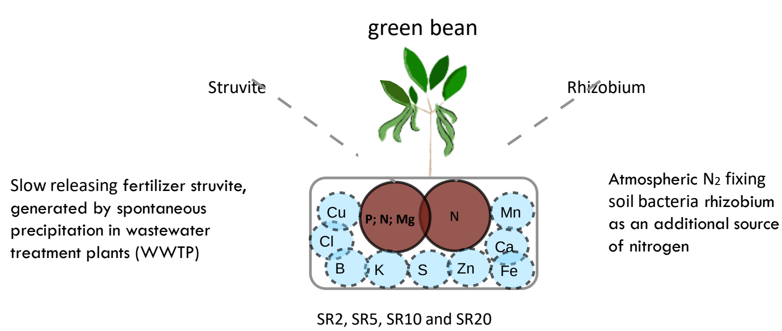
From theory to practice

Reduction of mineral fertilizer by using struvite and Rhizobium inoculation



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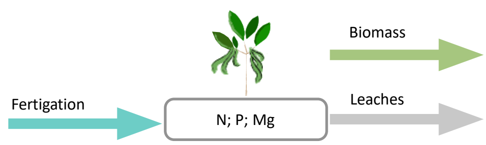
From theory to practice

Methodology and sampling



- The P, N and Mg content was determined for incoming and outgoing water-flows.

Life Cycle Analysis

- The functional unit (FU) was defined as 1kg of fresh beans.

The experiment infrastructure

- greenhouse structure,
- rainwater harvesting system,
- auxiliary equipment

The experiment operation system

- energy,
- pesticides,
- fertilizers,
- substrates

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From theory to practice: results

Yield

Production	2019			2020		
Treatment	SR2	SR5	Control 1	SR10	SR20	Control2
Total	1899.2 g	2375.6 g	4726.7 g	3542.2 g	4821.5 g	8198.4 g
Average per plant	59.3 g	74.2 g	147.7 g	110.7 g	150.6 g	256.2 g
Dif to control*	40.2%	50.3%	100%	43.2%	58.8%	100%

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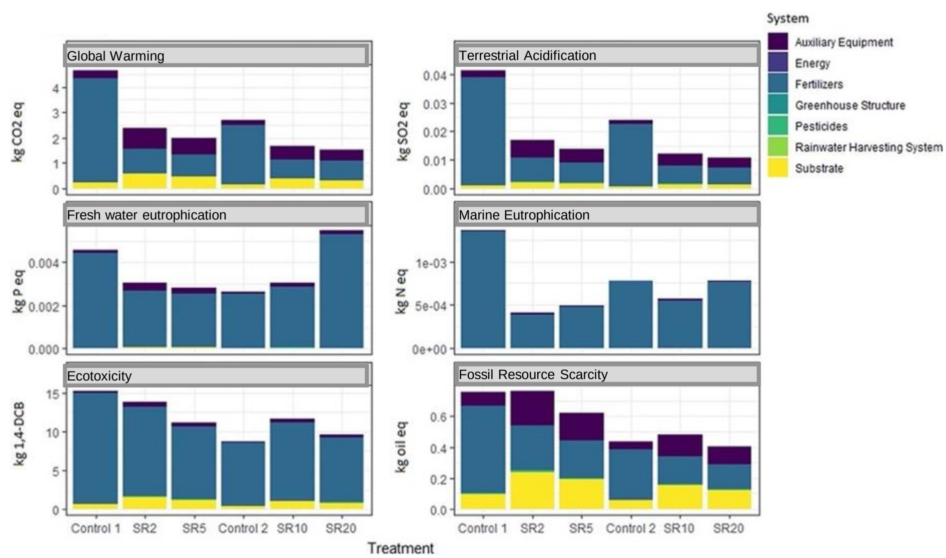
From theory to practice: results

Environmental impact of operational phase per kg of fresh beans.



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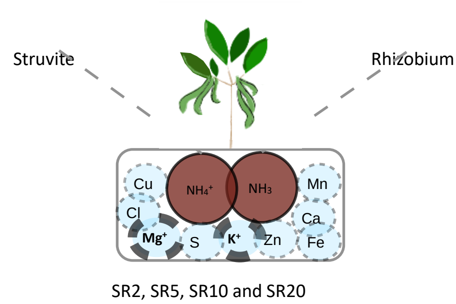
From theory to practice: results

Future research:

Struvite quantity insufficient due to Rhizobium inoculation

Electrochemical imbalance in the rhizosphere due to the missing anion in form of NO_3^-



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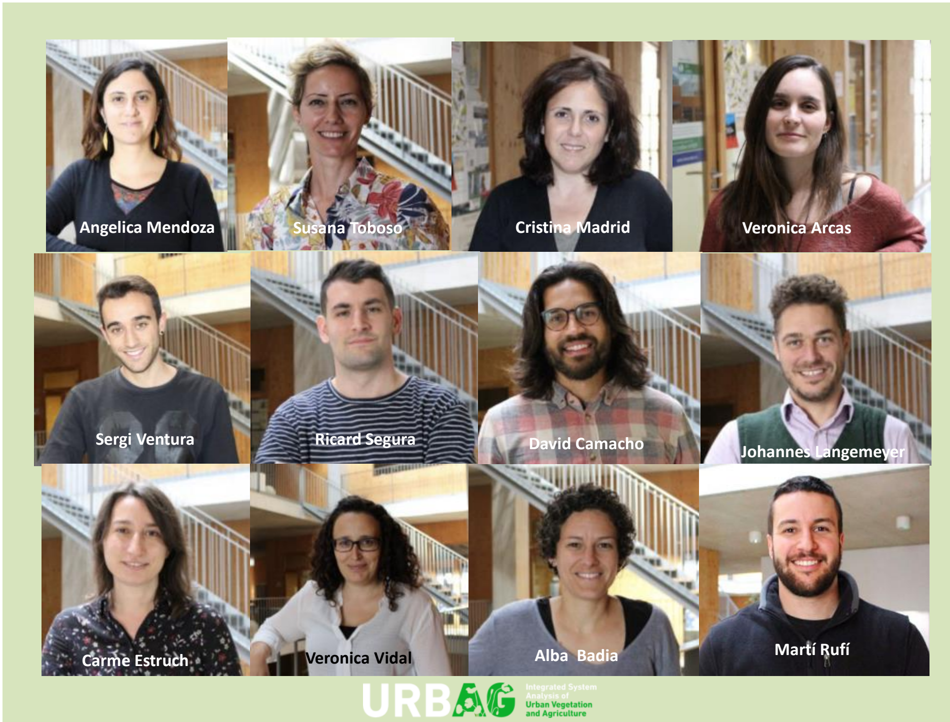

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References

Mendoza, K. Jepsen, M. Rufí-Salís, S. Ventura, C. Madrid-López, G. Villalba* (2022) ***Mapping direct N_2O emissions from peri-urban agriculture: The case of the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona.*** Science of The Total Environment. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2022.153514

Verónica Arcas-Pilz, Martí Rufí-Salís, Felipe Parada, Xavier Gabarrell, Gara Villalba* (2021) ***Assessing the environmental behavior of alternative fertigation methods in soilless systems: The case of Phaseolus vulgaris with struvite and rhizobia inoculation.*** Science of The Total Environment; https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2020.144744

Martí Rufí-Salís, Nadin Brunnhofer, Anna Petit-Boix, Xavier Gabarrell, Albert Guisasola, Gara Villalba* (2020) ***Can wastewater feed cities? Determining the feasibility and environmental burdens of struvite recovery and reuse for urban regions.*** Science of The Total Environment; https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2020.139783

Roc Padró, et al., (2020) ***Assessing the sustainability of contrasting land use scenarios through the Socioecological Integrated Analysis (SIA) of the metropolitan green infrastructure in Barcelona.*** Landscape and Urban Planning. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2020.103905

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URBAG Integrated System Analysis of Urban Vegetation and Agriculture

Thank you!

Please check out our entire team and invidual profiles at urbag.eu
Gara.Villalba@uab.cat
https://urbag.eu/

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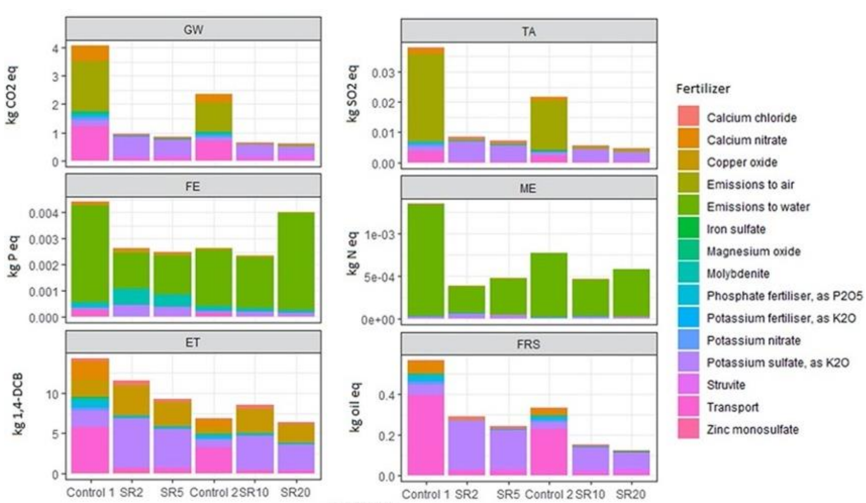
From theory to practice: results

Environmental impact of use of fertilizer/alternative per kg of fresh beans.



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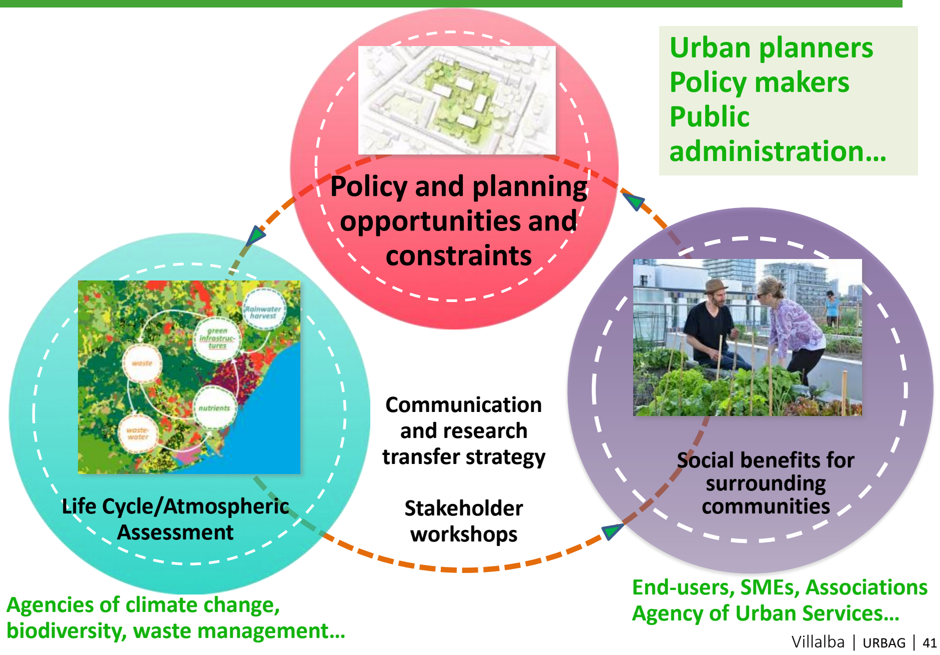

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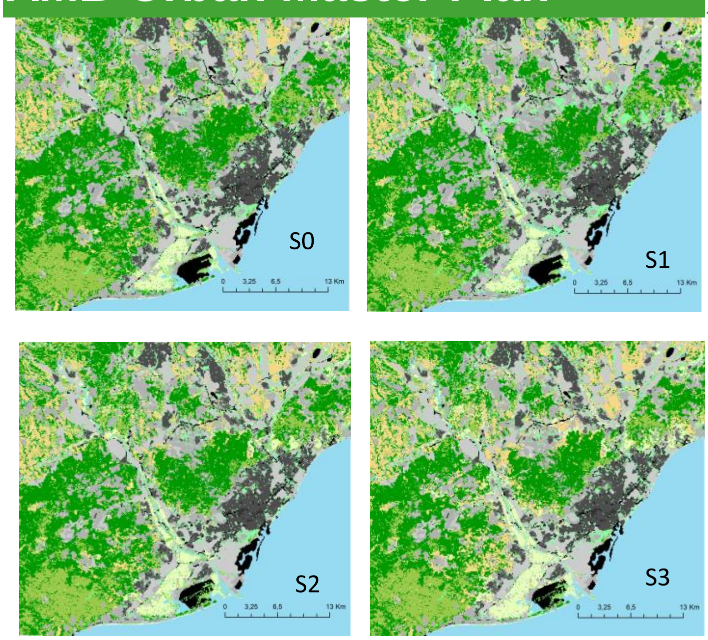
AMB Urban Master Plan



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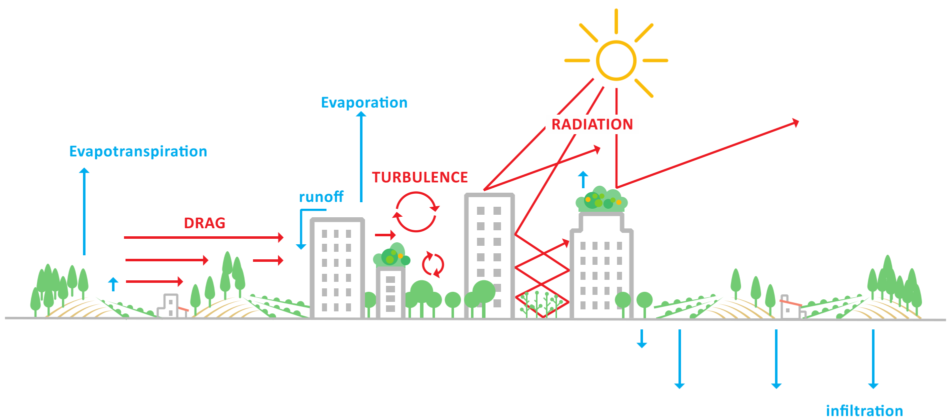
Develop a spatially-temporally resolved framework
for quantitative analysis and simulation of green infrastructures

Weather Research Forecasting Model with Chemical Transport and Urban Canopy Model



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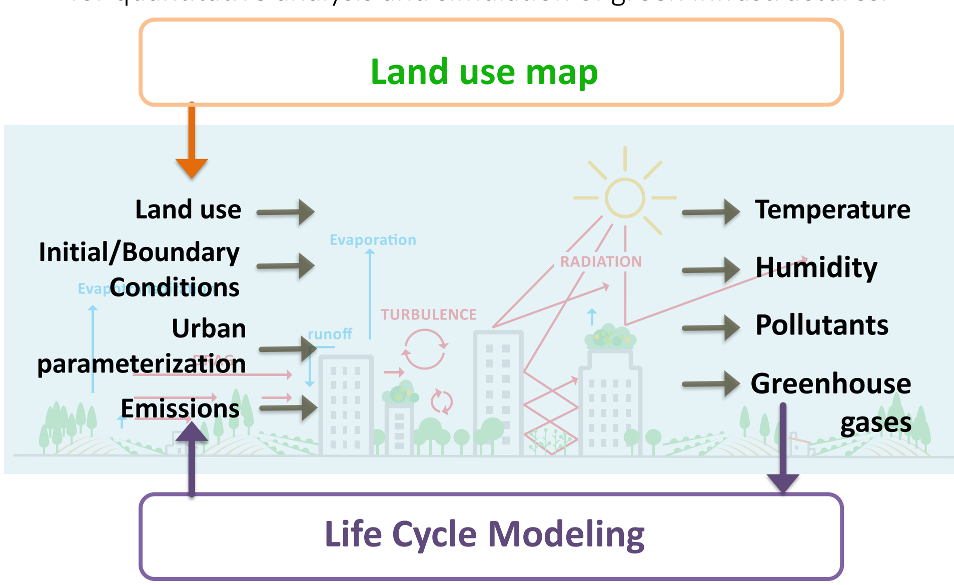

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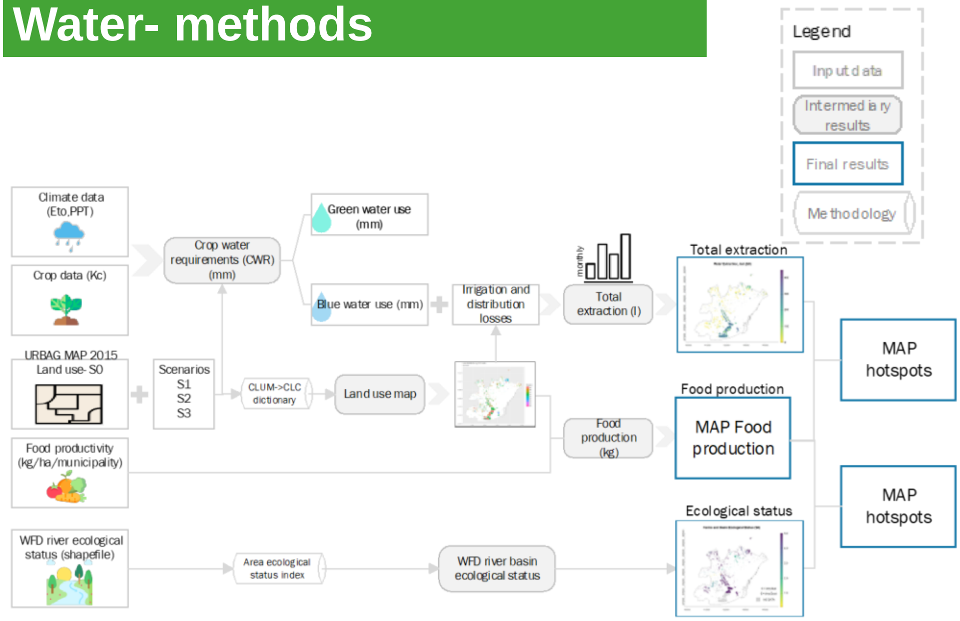
Water- methods



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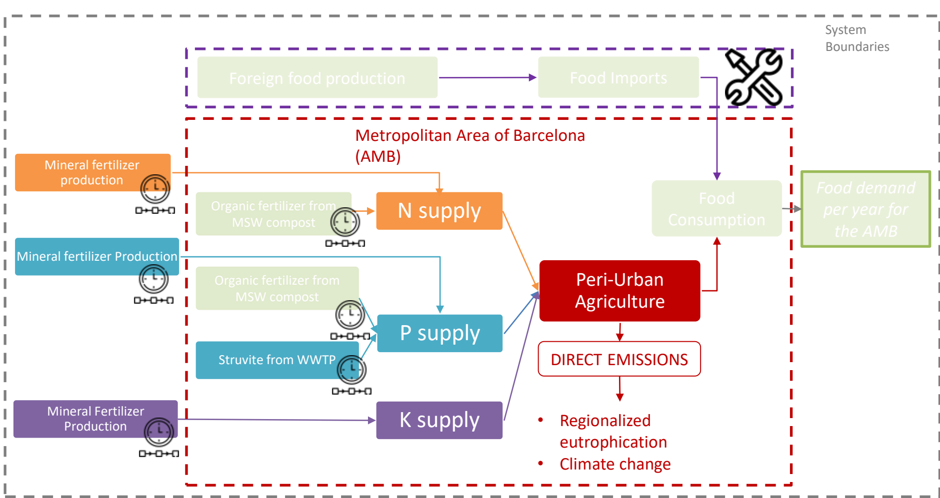

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Scenario Name	Abbreviation	Land cover map	Nutrient supply	Ecoinvent	Prospective scenarios for background	Years	Direct Emissions	Description	Reference
Current peri-UA 100% supply of nutrients from mineral fertilizer	S0_MinFert	S0	NPK from mineral fertilizer only	v3.8 Prospective v3.8	SSP2_RCP6 SSP2_RCP2.6 SSP2_RCP1.9	2015 2050	NH3_fert_air NH3_struv_air NOx_fert_air NOx_struv_air NO3_groundwater NO3_groundwater_struv N2O_direct_air N2O_direct_air_struv N2O_direct_air_total N2O_indirect_Volat_air N2O_indirect_LeachRunoff_air N2O_indirect_air N2O_total_air PO43_runoff_water PO43_runoff_struv PO43_runoff_water_total	Current peri-UA áreas with 100% supply of nutrients from imported mineral fertilizer. Background impacts calculated for current and prospective ecoinvent.	Land use scenario: Padrò et.al (2020) Background LCI databases: Sacchi et.al (2022)
Current peri-UA P supply from recovered struvite N and K from mineral fertilizers	S0_struvite	S0	P from struvite from WWTP. N and K from mineral fertilizer	v3.8 Prospective v3.8	SSP2_RCP6 SSP2_RCP2.6 SSP2_RCP1.9	2015 2050	NH3_fert_air NH3_struv_air > zero NOx_fert_air NOx_struv_air > zero NO3_groundwater NO3_groundwater_struv> zero N2O_direct_air N2O_direct_air_struv> zero N2O_direct_air_total N2O_indirect_Volat_air N2O_indirect_LeachRunoff_air N2O_indirect_air N2O_total_air PO43_runoff_water PO43_runoff_struv > zero PO43_runoff_water_total	Current peri-UA areas with 100% supply of P from locally recovered struvite from WWTP. N and K are supplied from mineral fertilizer. Background impacts of current and prospective ecoinvent.	Land use scenario: Padrò et.al (2020) Struvite recovery inventories based on but updated to ecoinvent v3.8: Rufií-Salís et.al (2020) Background LCI databases: Sacchi et.al (2022)

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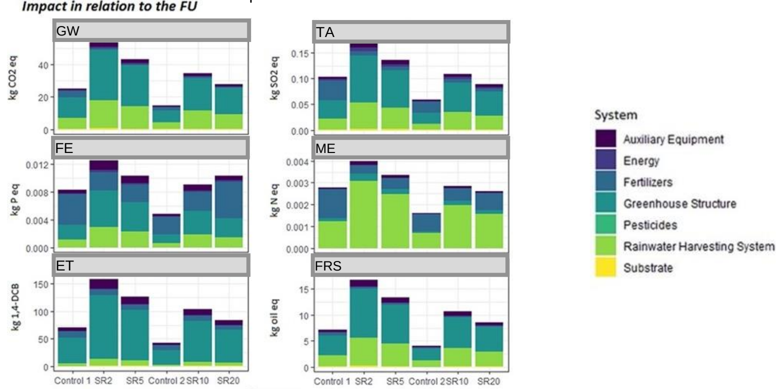
From theory to practice

Results Environmental impact resulting in all impact categories considering infrastructure and operation

Impact in relation to the FU



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